The Stars and Stripes

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The net paid circulation of THE STARS AND STRIPES for the issue of August 23, 1918, was 192,029, an increase of 8,490 over the previous week.

LABOR DAY

Next Monday is Labor Day.

If we were back home, those of us who didn't go fishing or take to the woods for the week-end would probably find a place in the parade, formed down by the American House, opposite the station, to march up Main Street in honor of Labor—in honor of Labor, whose part in the scheme of life some Americans never really saw till the cleansing whirlwind of war stripped our national existence of all its plasant, peace-time camouflage.

To Labor on Labor Day, let us send this message from the uttermost outpost of the front:

"We know that Alaska and Hawaii and California are but base sections of the A.E.F. We feel their loyalty. We feel their strength. We feel their great, heartening, sustaining shove in every acre of timberland cut to make airplanes, in every rivet driven in the plates, in every sheaf of wheat garnered for our rations next winter, in every ton of coal mined for the transports that bring us reinforcements.

"We cannot very well parade on Main Street this year, friends, but all that is dear and fine in America is honored in this summer's advance of the doughboys, the great parade that is under way now and will not break up this side of the Rhine."

PASSED BALL

The A.E.F. does not want a professional baseball team sent over from the States to play for it.

The A. E. F. recalls the recent difficulty between the big league magnates and the Secretary of War and rejoices in the prompt and righteous settlement thereof. With that deserved rebuke to professional baseball fresh in its mind, it could not accord any visiting all-American aggregation the cordial reception which, in happier and calmer days to come, it may possibly hail with all the joy that it was wont to in the days that have gone.

Not to mention the biggest argument of all—that the A.E.F. has so much perfectly good talent within its own ranks. There is, for example, a tolerably fair battery in Hank Gowdy and Grover Cleveland Alexander, both in France—and both in khaki.

COALS OF FIRE

Once in a while the temptation to grumble seems overpowering. Back home or back of the lines where monotony often enters, some piece of drudgery or some sacrifice may bring out a complaint.

Whatever the temptation to grumble may be, take a look at this picture before doing so.

In the recent push to the Vesle a Yank outfit fought its way forward for six days, chasing the beaten Hun.

For six days it tackled machine gun nests, faced rifle and shell fire, and yet moved so swiftly that none of its field kitchens could keep up the pace.

So for six days, in addition to its many other burdens, this organization went unfed except for a few cold morsels dealt out sparingly to preserve existence. Yet when the first mess sergeant finally caught up with the detachment he heard no grumblin, no complaining, no bitterness of any sort. He found each man accepting the situation as part of the game he was playing, as part of the burden he had come to carry, as part of the sacrifice he had to make.

These men, facing death, injury, hunger, thirst and almost unparalleled weariness, had no complaint to offer when, for the greater part of six days, they were forced to go without food.

If they refused to grumble over their lot, who else, in the Army or out of it, has the right to do so?

FOUND—BUT WAIT

To those outfits of the A.E.F. which had indicated their desire to adopt French war orphans provided those orphans had red hair and freckles, we replied some time ago that there wa'n't no sech young human animal in France. We traced up one brick-topped and freckle-faced youngster, but found that his father had taken him back to Ireland at an early age, where he probably still is. After that we gave up the search as hopeless, and the outfits in question adopted *filleuls* of more somber but none the less pleasing pigment.

But now, we own up that we were in error. There actually are titian-tressed and freckle-nosed children in France.

In Dijon there is a brilliantly rubicund boy of about 12, freckled till he looks like a General Staff may of a forest, who has the further engaging possession of as good an overhand baseball throw as Mr. Cornelius McGillicuddy could have wished for in his 570,000 franc infield.

In Bourges there is a most engaging auburn-locked and freckle-specked youth of nine year, who loves all Americans dearly and whose one burning desire is to learn English.

In Paris, over in the Latin Quarter, there is a similarly adorned little girl of about two, with hair like the setting sun, who is beautiful as are all little French girls, only more so, if that be possible.

But—and here's the rub—not one of them is a war orphan. Not one of them is even a plain orphan. So there you are.

THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME

To read the communiqués that chronicle the present British advance on both sides of the Ancre sends an odd thrill along the spine of one who followed the battle of the Somme that was raging in all its stubbornness exactly two years ago.

The names of the same twice obliterated villages leap into fame as the new advance carries the line across what has been called "the most desperate reach of country in France." Nowhere, if we except perhaps one or two of the most bitterly disputed corners of the great Verdun polygon, has ever such a weight of metal fallen, or ground been so torn and torn again by a promiscuous inferno of hostile and friendly fire. It is like fighting on the surface of the moon.

This wonderful war can produce anything that is superlative, anything that is unique in the history of battles, but it is doubtful if it can ever produce again such a battle as forced the Hun back, almost inch by inch, day by day for month on month, over the desolate sweep of Santerre, until, after a winter's wait, it forced him to make the first great "strategic retreat" to the so-called Hindenburg line before Cambrai and Saint-Quentin.

The world has spun round many times since then. But it has shown us no finer play of persistence, of dogged determination "to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer," of the stuff that the Allied generalissimo calls "the will to win."

THE UNTOLD TALES

More often than not, when the runners bring back word from the battlefield that a town has been taken and the communiqués flash the tidings to a waiting world, it does not mean that a specially stubborn citadel has fallen.

The town is named specifically so that anxious watchers from afar may know how considerable the advance has been. The town is singled out not necessarily because its capture meant the toughest job of the advance, but just because it has a name.

So you hear much of the regiment that took Sergy, the brigade that took Seringes, the men that took Fismes. You do not hear so much of those who took Hill 230 or Hill 212, of those who stormed this gunbristling grove or that ominous river bank, who stormed and held yonder railroad embankment or that ancient vineyard which proved no less forbidding a fortress because it was nameless.

LEADERSHIP

In the greatest of all dog stories, "Bob, Son of Battle," there is set forth the chronicle of a mighty shepherd dog, the Tailless Tyke, who, with teeth bared and hackles bristling, could sweep the sheep across country, over the stream and into the pen by driving them in terror before him. But in the great contest for the Dale Cup he was forever outsped and outclassed by Bob, a dog so trusted that he could lead the way in the sure knowledge that the fold would follow him.

Not long ago the taking of a bit of deadly forest near the Marne was left to a Yankee platoon. The waiting enemy machine guns were so placed that many of the platoon expected either to be wounded or killed outright.

The platoon leader—and to our minds there is no higher or more honorable post in all the A.E.F. than that of platoon leader—had grown so fond of the jolly, generous, uncomplaining men under him that when it came time to order the advance his heart ached, his throat contracted, his lips would not utter the order. That advance never was ordered. But it was made.

"Boys," the young lieutenant called out, "I'm going over there. Anyone who wants to come along is welcome."

He went over the top. And no man in that platoon stayed behind.

FRANCE

A tired and dusty doughboy drew up in front of a shell-battered house in Château-Thierry and asked a Frenchwoman if he could get a drink of water.

"Out, mon garcon," said the woman, "You come right along with me."

After the soldier had obtained his drink and was about to depart, he remarked that her house had suffered more or less from the guns.

"Yes," was the reply, "I used it as a dressing station for the Americans who were wounded here and the boche seemed to know about it. But it's all right. We will build it up again and everything will be the same."

She explained in detail just how she would rearrange the architecture, how the windows would be built larger.

"We will have to carry a lot of rock," she smiled. "You see, those are all shot to pieces. But it's not far to the river."

Then she turned and resumed her task of clearing away the debris that had once been the east wall of her house.

BULL ABOUT PULL

"When a fellow brags that he has a pull, he's either a liar or his employer is a fool," wrote old Gorgon Graham. Though it was written about business, it holds just as true with regard to the Army.

It's all very nice to think that you're "in right with the old man," but it's all very wrong to brag about it. You won't prove anything by bragging.

The only proof worth two whoops is that furnished "by the old man" when and if he raises you a peg for your good work. And the way "the old men" run in this Army of ours, they are mighty hard to fool, and "pull," in the best sense, has got to be mighty well earned.

The Army's Poets

TO THE MARNE

Marne! Thou thrice historic stream,
That slow meanders through Champagne,
If thou couldst tell what thou hast seen
Of peace and peril, joy and pain,
Thy sister rivers far and near,
Scamander of the Trojan plain,
Where flashed Achilles' mighty spear,
And Ilian lifeblood flowed like rain;
Oxus, where Alexander passed,
And sighed because the earth was small,
Ganges and Tiber, all at last,
Before thee would in homage fall
And worship at thy flood.

Upon thy banks the wondering Celt
Saw Caesar's golden eagles fly,
And suession and Gelgae felt
The conquering hand of Rome pass by;
And when the legions long had passed
To Goth-encircled Rome again,
Thy vale re-echoed to the blast
And battlecry of Charlemagne.
When Attila, "the Scourage of God,"
Back with his horde of Huns was hurled,
Thy bank it was which Clovis trod,
To succor France, for all the world
Again to shed her blood.

And now along the sedgy sward,
Our brothers, too, lie side by side,
Where four great nations stand on guard,
Whom race and tongue no more divide,
Where thrice the Hunnish waves have dashed
Like waves upon a granite rock
By furious storms and tempests lashed
And thrice been shattered by the shock;
Where countless men have fought and died
And laughed aloud at death and pain,
That such things might no more betide,
And thou shouldst flow unstained again,
And evermore have peace.

James Beveridge, San. Det., 1st Army Hq. Rgt.

OUR DEAD

They lie entombed in serried ranks,
A cross atop each lonely grave.
They rest beneath the peaceful banks
They fought so valiantly to save.

This ground made sacred by their tears,
Our starry flag above each head,
For upwards of a thousand years
A shrine shall be unto our dead.

Chaplain Thomas F. Coakley.

MY COMRADES

Albert and Ben were both fighting men,
Strong soldiers of the National Guard;
At the President's order, they went to the Border,
Where their muscles grew firm and hard.

They were always together, in all kinds of weather,
And were as close as good friends can be;
When Albert was glad, so was the other lad;
They lived in wonderful harmony.

One fine day we sailed away
For France and the western front;
Three months we trained while it rained and rained,
Then we were ready for our stunt.

Albert and Ben were Stokes mortar men,
And they knew how to work their guns.
They fired shell after shell ,and gave a great yell
As they killed and wounded the Huns.

One day the machine guns' rattle gave notice of battle,
And these boys both rushed to the place,
But an H.E. shell burst and both fell—
Each died with a smile on his face.

They were always together, in all kinds of weather,
And together they died in France,
And I know, when they died, they were both satisfied,
They were glad that they had the chance.

For their sisters and brothers, sweethearts and mothers,
Their country and the Red, White and Blue,
They fought to the end, did Ben and his friend—
Their example is worth following through.

Sgt. John J. Curtin, Inf.

"LET'S GO"

Let's go, boys, let's go;
Let's go to strike for freedom's right.
Let's go to down the creed of might;
What matter if our youth we give,
If but exalted truth will life?
What matter if young blood is spilt,
When on our bodies will be built
The temple of eternal peace,
And strife 'mongst men forever cease?
Let's go, boys, let's go.

Let's go and teach barbarity
The milestones of humanity,
And curb the last great tyrant's greed
Until each man on earth is freed.
Let each man dedicate his soul
To liberty's immortal goal,
And give the world a finer birth,—
To men good will, and peace on earth.

Let's go, boys, let's go;
On freedom's frontiers heroes fall,
And, "Carry on!" to us they call.
What matter if perchance we die—
The quest is long, the dream is high;
Let's go the glory-day to gain,
When Brotherhood 'mongst men will reign.
The bugles call, the drum-taps roll,
Let's go with cheer and daring soul—
Let's go, boys, let's go.

Fra Guido, F.A.

MY BEST GIRL

I stood on the transport deck
As the ship went down the bay
And saw your dear form slowly
In the distance fade away.

Your hand upraised in farewell,
A light shone in your eye;
"Dear heart, I must see you again."
I breathed with a heavy sigh.

The maids of France are truly chic,
The English girls are fair,
But in my dreams I only see
You, darling, standing there.

Some day the Hun must go
And la belle France be free;
My duty done, I pray
I may recross the sea.

I know that you'll be waiting,
You best you'll give to me;
I'll throw you kisses far,
Dear Statue of Liberty.

E. E. R., F.A.

MY JOB

It brings a smile, this job of mine;
I meet adventure every minute,
Finding afresh, each little while,
Some new fun in it.

I bravely breathe the magic word of
Love to nice girls, quite unoffending,
And send, to maids I'd never heard of,
Kisses unending.

I pen proposals by the hour,
Dinner engagements by the second:
And all the love plans I've seen flower
Can not be reckoned.

I know more secrets than the Boche
Need ever hope of ascertaining,
More power mine than Haig of Foch
Dare hope attaining.

You see, I write the fellows' letters,
Be they pour de dejeuner ou danser,
To peasant maids, or to their betters,
In limpid Francais!

John Black.

TRANSPORT DAYS

Old transport days, no, I'll never regret 'em,
Days when this life seemed too good to be true,
Blue afternoons, will I ever forget 'em?
Watching the combers slide by in review.
Sunshine and laughter and long, lazy napping,
Curled on the deck while the planking was hot,
Bow wash for lullaby soothingly slapping,
World and its worriments all gone to pot.

We had the wonders of ocean at dawning,
Ours were the glories of sunsets astern,
Tang of the spray on the lips in the morning,
Nights, black as jet, where the star candles burn.
Pals to be proud of made better the jesting,
Comrades of voyage and partners in chance,—
Those were the days of a golden, glad questing,
Old transport days on the sea road to France.

Stewart M. Emery, A.E.F.

MADE IN AMERICA

THE LITTLE TRANQUIL PLACES

Les petites places tranquilles, the little, shaded quiet parks, noiseless save for the soft play of fountains and the shrill laughter of happy children, studies in black and white and olive drab by day, studies in varicolored uniforms of all sorts by night or on the festive Sunday—what would the towns and cities of inland France be without them?

In them is quiet and repose and coolness for the wounded, the toil-worn and the homesick. In them is utter forgetfulness of the noise of war and the endless preparation for it. In them the hues of martial apparel are softened and blended and brought into harmony with Nature. In them is peace.

Not a city or town in the great bustling area of the Service of Supplies is without its "little tranquil places." If there were a single town without at least one, it would be no longer French, no longer human—nothing but a dull, dreary prison of a town, unfit for mortal habitation. But there is no such parkless town; at least, none has yet been discovered. If by any chance there is one, it is somewhere in hiding.

To these little parks, on scorching late summer afternoons, come the Yanks of the S.O.S. on pass—men a little fagged with the work of the shops, the long runs on trains, the hard days on road-building, on truck-driving, on guard duty. In the so-called "hospital towns"—and there are now few towns of any size in the S.O.S. that cannot boast American Army hospitals—the influx of Yanks is even greater.

There, on the benches under the trees, they loll in luxuriant ease, letting their eyes rest on the pleasing uniform flower beds and well shorn hedges, and unconsciously playing the hero to the wide-eyed little children who sidle up beside him first in timorous awe and then, reassured by the friendly grin, in open and hand-holding admiration and friendship.

There, in the quiet and well-ordered little place, they gaze with half shut eyes at the cooling green and the splashing water before them; draw large inhalations of smoke, leisurely and with full enjoyment of every breath of it, and forget, insofar as it is humanly possible to forget, the times and scenes

When men leap on to victory
With lunge and curse and crash.

There they sit, allowing themselves to vegetate in sheer animal delight at being quiet and alone, save for the trusting and adoring children. With amused eyes they watch the youngsters tread primly through the age-old games *en cercle*, and attune their ears anew to the sweet music of children's voices, chirruping out the quaint old songs of the country.

It is pleasant, indeed, to be convalescent in such surroundings; and even if the sight of the children and the calm of the peaceful little park should be conducive to a wave of homesickness, it is a not unwelcome ache that the homesick feeling brings. There are sorrows that are so sweet in the experiencing that they become actual joys; and for a man who has not had leisure for many, many weeks to give himself up to thoughts of home and the restfulness and quiet mirth that make home what it is, the little parks afford an ideal atmosphere in which to let go, and think, and think. . . . . .

But the more robust of the convalescent, itching under the prod of their returning strength, cannot sit still and watch the children at play. They must be up and in it; not too strenuously, for that would delay their much awaited getting back "up there," and that would never do. Still, they can and do pitch "slow ones" to the barelegged youngsters who stand in line with outstretched hands, and who, under expert American tutelage, are becoming remarkable fielders, the little girls being even more adept than the boys.

What they would do with the regulation leather-covered, rubber-cored spehoid, the mending Yank neither knows nor cares; the soft, air-filled rubber ball is about their speed at this stage—and, in the exquisite laziness of his convalescence, he figures that it is about his speed, too.

So the near-well Yanks teach young France to stop grounders and pick up Texas leaguers, and the not-so-near-well Yanks just loaf and take it easy and help the kiddies to climb up on their laps with the aid of their good arms, and try to read their identification tags, and the quite-well Yanks linger in the simple and beautiful old square as long as they dare to until the evening comes on apace, and the hands of the clock on the Hotel de Ville or Palais de Justice swing ever nearer around to the ultimate time marked upon the Yanks' precious passes. And then, with a last pat for the youngsters and a last look around the little spot of restfulness, the real children of France and the grown-up children of America say good-night, and go away.

A.E.F. SCHOOL SONGS

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

In connection with the Army Engineer school, there was recently conducted a training camp for officers who were to be returned to the States to train new troops.

The discipline was most rigid and our instructors told us that it was like West Point. Of course, we do not know about that, but we hope that it is not altogether true.

The principal product of the course was, of course, officers—colonels, majors and captains—out of such raw material as Reserve captains and lieutenants, but among the by-products were a number of songs which, I think, are worthy of a place in the editor's waste-basket, at least, and which show that the spirit of the students was good.

I therefore submit a few that I recall, together with the incidents that inspired the authors.

There was a "demerit" system in force, and there was a rigid inspection of pieces each day. A spot of rust not visible to the unaided eye of the student could be easily seen when pointed out by an instructor. Hence, we have No. 1, tune: "There's a Little Bit of Bad in Every Good Little Girl"—

There's a little bit of rust in every clean little bore,
They're all the same;
Though it makes you very, very sore,
You are not to blame;
You'll have to grin and bear it,
It's just one more demerit;
There's a little bit of dust on every clean little gun,
So, what's your name?

If more than four demerits were accumulated in any one week, the owners thereof dug eight cubic feet of material (mostly rock) for each demerit in excess of that number on the following Sunday. One ambitious rookie completed his task in such a short time that the instructor decided his punishment was too light, and he was given another task.

The following is by Lieut. Wallace Campbell, brother of the American ace; tune: "You Wore a Tulip"—

You pushed a shovel, a short-handled shovel,
And I swung a —— —— pick;
It was then we built fences, dug pipe-lines and trenches,
And the dirt was flying thick.
When you got your job done, they'd find you another one.
So it didn't pay to be too quick;
The front rank a shovel, a short-handled shovel,
The rear rank a —— —— pick.

The police regulations were in keeping with other regulations. All our worldly belongings had to be accommodated on one small shelf at the foot of the bunk and two hooks at the head. Each pile on the shelf contained certain things, which must be folded a certain way. The hooks likewise must have their proper load. "Try this on your piano," tune: "Castles on the River Rhine"—

At that Army school at ——,
Where you do every damned thing wrong.
Cigarette butts on the floor,
And demerits by the score,
Beans and coffee for every mess,
Squads Right, Column Right and Left Dress.
And now your socks are folded wrong;
And your coat is on the wrong hook,
Take another long look,
Put it back where it belongs.

The school has been so widely advertised by the students since their "liberation" that I am sure the above will be of interest to many of the readers of THE STARS AND STRIPES.

Lt. R. W. Hunter, Engrs., U.S.A.

LEAVE IN ENGLAND

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

Are American soldiers allowed to go to England when they get furlough if their parents are living in England?

One of Uncle Sam's Boys.

[England is outside of the designated leave area, but Paragraph 9 of G.O. 6, governing the leave system, says that leaves for soldiers to visit immediate relatives "may be granted for other areas than those allotted to their units." The term "immediate relatives" includes father, mother, wife, child, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts.—Editor.]

WHEN BUDDY MEETS COBBER

The Yankee troops who played a small but eminently satisfactory part in the early stages of the third battle of the Somme have, as it happens, spent the greater part of their soldiering in France in close comradeship with the soldiers who volunteered for this war from under the Southern Cross. If the feelings and experiences of this group are any guide, it may be said now that Aussie and Yank are, and until the end of the war will be, thicker than thieves.

A like comradeship was sealed for another group on July 4 when, for the first time in history, Yanks fought under the Union Jack. In that battle, which pried the Germans loose from Hamel, the Americans went in with the Australians.

Not all the outfit was invited to the July 4 party, and there were great heartburnings among those who had vainly hoped to the last that they would be among those present. The Aussies, however, will tell you with a chuckle that some of the disappointed ones played hookey from their outfits, borrowed some of the dashing Australian uniforms, and smuggled themselves into the fight uninvited. Warm was the glow of their pride when, after that little affair was over, the Australians judicially pronounced them "tough customers."

Again, when Americans on August 9 double-timed cross-country to get into the battle of the Somme, Yanks fought not with, but right next door to, their pals from Australia. Their wounded were carried to the Australian casualty clearing stations for as able and solicitous administration to their hurts as they could have had from their own people.

Since early in the summer the two groups of soldiers from the New World have seen much of each other. In the back areas, which only the night-raiding pilots of the sky and the longer guns can reach, they may always be seen in each other's company, fighting each other's battles against all the rest of mankind, drifting in and out of each other's canteens, dropping in on each other's mess lines. An Aussie cook is never too busy to fix up a dish of tea for a passing Yank, for it really is tea the Yank drinks on the British front—mostly.

"Hello, Aussie!"

"Ay, Yank!"

These are the affable greetings you hear exchanged among the ruins of half-obliterated villages along the Somme, or called out in the gathering twilight from truck seat to truck seat as the long trains of supplies pass each other on the roads that lead to Amiens redeemed.

"Ay, cobber, got room for one more?" a voice will call out of the darkness as a Yankee wagon creeps along toward the front, while the British searchlights sweep the sky with piercing brilliance, and far overhead can be heard the rat-a-tat-tat of a flying machine gun in venomous pursuit of a Gotha.

"Surest thing you know, Aussie, old scout," and the wagon has a new passenger.

Once ensconced, passenger and driver chew over the possibilities of the American's taking in Australia on his way home to the States when the war is done. He would like to see a young country which, out of 5,000,000 inhabitants, had enrolled some 500,000 men by voluntary enlistment for service on a battlefield the other side of the world. And Aussie wants to have a look at this here Woolworth building. He wants to see Niagara Falls.

"And, say," says the driver, "you ought to see the Roosevelt Dam."

Visit any American colonel's dugout during a lull in the hostilities, and you will find some Australian officer has dropped—or rather crawled—in for tea. Visit any sheltered haunt of the enlisted men after pay-day, and you will find the Yanks staking the residue from his insurance and Liberty bonds on the breathless hazards of "Two-up," the Aussie's favorite game. They even favor the same forms of rough language. They have a bond in the use of the same favorite cuss-word.

"Yank," says Aussie, reflectively removing his pipe for an historic utterance, "you're a dinkum bloke. [That's Australian for "regular guy."] Yank, you're a wonderful soldier. Why, doggone it, you're as good a soldier as I am."

WHERE'S THIS VIOLIN?

To the Editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES:

Some time ago, knowing that I couldn't carry it much longer, I gave my violin to an ambulance driver in the Château-Thierry district. I told him to take it to a hospital for whoever could use it.

As I am now in the hospital myself, I would like to correspond with whoever has it, with the idea of getting it again.

My old address is on the bottom of the case: Pvt. Harold A. Kirk, Co. L, — Inf. My present address is:

Pvt. Harold A. Kirk,
Base Hospital 8, A.P.O. 705.